

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 6578

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR NATO UR XH RO YO

SUBJ: NOVEMBER 26 NAC DISCUSSION OF SOVIET/EE EXPERTS REPORT

REF: A. USNATO 6420; B. STATE 258740

1. EXPERTS CHAIRMAN DE BEAUSSE OPENED SUBSTANTIVE PORTION OF NOVEMBER 26 NAC DISCUSSION OF SOVIET/EE EXPERTS' REPORT (REF A) WITH REFERENCE TO EXPERTS JUDGMENT THAT THE SOVIET UNION'S RELATIVELY IMPROVED ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL SITUATION PERMITTED IT TO EXERT GREATER PRESSURE ON THE EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IN THEIR DEALINGS WITH ALLIED GOVERNMENTS. DE BEAUSSE NOTED THAT THE EXPERTS HAD SPENT LITTLE TIME IN DISCUSSING POLISH AND HUNGARIAN EVENTS SINCE THEY HAD WANTED TO DISCUSS BALKAN DEVELOPMENTS IN DETAIL. THEIR REPORT, ACCORDINGLY, WAS CONSIDERABLY LONGER THAN USUAL IN ITS COVERAGE OF ROMANIA AND
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YUGOSLAVIA.

2. DANISH PERMREP (SVART) COMMENTED THAT EXPERTS' ASSESSMENT WAS EXCELLENT AND USEFUL. NOT ONLY WAS IT FULL IN ITS COVERAGE

OF GENERAL THEMES BUT ALSO CONTAINED SUFFICIENT ATTENTION TO INTERESTING DETAILS. IN REFERRING TO JUDGMENT ABOUT SOVIET ECONOMIC INDICATORS, SVART WONDERED WHY WESTERN OBSERVERS VERY RARELY COMMENTED ABOUT THE QUALITY OF SOVIET PRODUCTS SINCE CITATION OF ECONOMIC GROWTH IN PERCENTAGE TERMS ALONG GIVES A SOMEWHAT DISTORTED VIEW OF INDUSTRIAL CAPABILITIES.

3. IN CONTEXT OF PARA 9 OF THE ANNEX ON DETENTE, SVART CAUTIONED AGAINST ATTEMPTS TO EXPLOIT POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SOVIETS AND EE'S SINCE HISTORY HAD SHOWN OBJECTIVES ARE MORE EASILY ATTAINED IF WESTERN GOVERNMENTS INFORM SOVIETS, IN ADVANCE, OF THEIR INTENTIONS TOWARD EE'S.

4. CANADIAN CHARGE (ROY), REFERRING TO DIFFERENT MEANINGS WHICH SOVIETS AND WEST ASCRIBE TO "DETENTE" AND "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE" (IN PARAGRAPH 1 OF THE ANNEX), NOTED DICHOTOMY OF SOVIETS' CONTINUING TO ESPOUSE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WHILE PURSUING THEIR IDEOLOGICAL GOALS IN THE WEST. ROY ALSO ASKED WHETHER THE SOVIETS WERE REALLY SEEKING DETENTE WITHIN WESTERN MEANING THROUGH PURSUIT IN CSCE OF THEIR TRADITIONAL OBJECTIVE OF CODIFYING EUROPEAN FRONTIERS. THUS IT MIGHT BE MISLEADING TO SUGGEST, AS DOES PARAGRAPH 9 OF THE EXPERTS' REPORT, THAT THE SOVIETS MIGHT BE WILLING TO MAKE SACRIFICES IN THE PURSUIT OF DETENTE, SINCE THE WILLINGNESS TO SACRIFICE MIGHT BE EVEN GREATER WERE THE GOAL WESTERN ACQUIESCENCE IN THE EUROPEAN STATUS QUO. MCAULIFFE

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